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AUTHOR Wilson, Franklin D.
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ABSTRACT

Using data from 63 public school districts serving central cities, this paper addresses the issue of whether whites' utilization of alternate forms of schooling is racially motivated. An effort is made to determine whether residence in census tract units of varying racial composition influences white out-migration and white utilization of nonpublic schools. Results show that residential populations living within individual school districts differ with respect to the extent of racial selection in residential relocation and nonpublic school utilization, according to region, percentage of black public school pupils, type of district, and implementation of school desegregation programs. (Author/KB)

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INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON POVERTY DISCUSSION PAPERS

PATTERNS OF WHITE AVOIDANCE

Franklin D. Wilson

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Patterns of White Avoidance

Franklin D. Wilson

June 1978

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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the issue of whether whites' utilization of alternate forms of schooling is racially motivated. More specifically, an effort is made to determine whether residence in census tract units of varying racial composition influences white out-migration and utilization of nonpublic schools. Results are reported and summarized for sixty-three public school districts serving central cities. It is found that residential populations living within individual school districts differ with respect to the extent of racial selection in residential relocation and nonpublic school utilization, according to region, percentage of public school pupils black, type of district, and implementation of school desegregation programs.

Patterns of White Avoidance

1. INTRODUCTION

Public policies directed toward reducing the extent of racial isolation within the nation's school districts have provoked a great deal of controversy among parents, politicians, and academics. One of the most controversial aspects of school desegregation programs has been the necessity of reassigning large numbers of pupils to schools located away from their immediate residential areas. Some researchers (Katzman, 1977; Taeuber and Wilson, forthcoming) question whether such programs are producing their intended outcome.

This concern has stimulated interest in the identification of factors causally related to school segregation, and in finding alternate ways of reducing the extent of racial isolation in the nation's public school systems. One area of inquiry focuses on the interrelations between racial residential and school segregation (Wilson and Taeuber, forthcoming). Two of the main issues under scrutiny are the extent of correspondence between residential and school segregation, and whether the attainment of racially mixed neighborhoods promotes desegregated school environments. This paper focuses on the second of these issues, and assesses the potential for school desegregation in selected central city school districts based on the residential patterns of black and white pupils. The current effort to illuminate this issue asks whether neighborhoods of varying racial composition influence whites to seek alternate forms of schooling either by migrating or through increased utilization of nonpublic schools.

The necessity of implementing school desegregation programs is premised on the supposition that acceptable levels of interracial contact cannot be expected when the attendance zones of schools embrace contiguous residential areas that are homogeneous in racial composition; that is, observed levels of racial isolation in public schools are thought to reflect the extent of prevailing racial residential segregation (Farley, 1975; Wolf, 1976). Thus it would seem to follow that interracial contact in public schools could be enhanced significantly if residential neighborhoods were racially mixed.

2. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

If one were to employ existing estimates of racial residential segregation for central cities of metropolitan areas as a baseline for assessing the potential for school desegregation based on residential patterns, approximately three-fourths of the whites or blacks would have to shift their residential location in order to achieve maximum school desegregation (Sørensen, 1975; Schnare, 1977; Van Valey, Roof, and Wilcox, 1977). However, there is one basic flaw in this line of argument: Racial composition of public schools does not depend exclusively on that of residential areas. Both school district administrative policies and the availability of alternate schooling without a change of residence can act to distort the correspondence between the racial composition of schools and residential areas. Evidence for the first source of distortion is indicated by the large number of court rulings in favor of plaintiffs who have charged that the extent

of racial isolation prevailing within a given district was partially related to specific acts perpetrated by school boards and administrators.

The effect that utilization of alternate forms of schooling has on attenuating the extent of correspondence between racial, residential and school segregation has yet to be thoroughly investigated. At issue is whether whites' utilization of alternate schooling is racially motivated. The logical point of departure with respect to finding an answer to this question would be to analyze the responses of whites living in racially mixed residential areas. A search of the relevant literature uncovered only a few studies that have attempted to address the question of whether racially mixed neighborhoods lead to similar mixing in schools. Bradburn, Sudman, and Gockel (1970, p. 302) report that they could find little support for the notion that white parents shift their children from one school to another (public or private) in response to the racial composition of their neighborhood. On the other hand, they do note (p. 294) that there appears to be a light increase in the relationship between the willingness of white parents to send their children to integrated schools and the proportion of blacks in those schools.

The Bradburn, Sudman, and Gockel study focused on integrated neighborhoods that were stable in racial composition. These types of neighborhoods are only a small fraction of the neighborhoods located within large urban areas. The literature on residential succession indicates that most neighborhoods with black and white households in residence are in various stages of racial succession (Aldrich, 1975). The process of residential succession based on race has a major impact on the structure of neighborhood institutions and organizational forms

(Malatch, 1972). The neighborhood based elementary school is one organizational form whose population composition is affected by that of the population it serves.

Wegmann (1975, pp. 3-4) notes that in neighborhoods undergoing racial transition the proportion of blacks in public elementary schools tends to exceed the proportion they represent of the population residing within the attendance area of individual schools. Wegmann speculates that white outmigration and nonpublic school utilization, and the higher fertility rate of black households are the major factors associated with this differential (see also Aldrich, 1975, p. 337). The findings of a recent case study of the Los Angeles school district are consistent with this observation. That study provides the conceptual framework for the analysis reported in this paper.

Wilson and Taeuber (forthcoming) sought to determine whether the increased presence of minorities in residential areas invokes avoidance responses among whites, as in the increased utilization of private and parochial schools or the out-migration of families with school age children. It was suggested that avoidance was likely if whites desire to minimize the extent of contact their children have with blacks because of perceptions of the lowering of educational standards, breakdown of discipline, and/or because of racially prejudiced attitudes. These authors found that even after controlling for the general ecological characteristics of attendance areas, percent black among the school age populations of attendance zones was substantially associated with private school utilization, the out-migration of white families with school age children, and a lower representation of whites in public schools (pp. 16-20).

The data used in the Wilson-Taeuber analysis predate the desegregation controversy in Los Angeles, and provide direct evidence on the residence/school link as a component of the general process of white avoidance of racially mixed housing and schools. Although limited in universe of coverage, two important (but tentative) conclusions are indicated by the findings of this study, both of which should be reviewed further. First, it is clear that some whites seek to avoid attending schools with blacks regardless of the form or instrument of racial contact. This observation is consistent with the literature on racial residential succession, which indicates that most racially mixed residential areas are unstable and are likely to become uniracial at some point in the future. The second conclusion is that the racial composition of some public schools at a given point in time may already bear the imprint of white avoidance even in the absence of the implementation of desegregation programs. This conclusion is consistent with findings reported in the literature on residential differentiation, which indicates that people respond to the racial identification of their neighbors in making a residential decision (Pettigres, 1973; Farley, Schuman, Bianchi, Colasanto, and Hatchett, 1977; Colasanto, 1977). Thus the possibility of achieving racially mixed school environments based on the residential patterns of blacks and whites appears less likely in communities whose residential structure already bears the imprint of racial selection.

3. DATA AND METHODS

The findings from the Los Angeles case study must be regarded as highly tentative, since they are based on the experience of only one large central city, and thus may not be representative of other communities. This investigation is an extension of the Los Angeles study, and applies a similar conceptual framework to further explore the association between the racial composition of

residential areas and white nonpublic school utilization and out-migration for 63 central city school districts.

This analysis makes use of data from the 1970 census tapes for census tracts (fourth count). For each central city school district, the unit of analysis is a census tract containing residential populations. It is important to note that these census tracts reflect the boundaries of school districts and not those of the politically defined central city.[1]

Attention is focused on the black and Anglo (white) residential population age 5-13 years, the age span covered by elementary schools. The Anglo population was obtained by subtracting persons of Hispanic origin from the category of persons designated as "white" on the census tapes. This adjustment is necessary because the fourth count census data only distinguish between blacks and whites as ethnic categories, and the latter category includes persons of Spanish surname or Spanish language.

The 63 school districts included in this study represent a convenience sample, as they were selected primarily on the basis of data availability and the fact that blacks represent at least 10% of public school enrollment in 1970. However, the similarities and differences between them are relevant for the analysis. For example, each of the four major regions are represented, there are county-wide as well as central city districts, and 59% of the districts had implemented some form of desegregation program on or before 1970 (see Table 1).

It is hypothesized that if many Anglo parents seek to avoid sending their children to schools in which the potential for contact with black pupils is great (or which are perceived to be poor schools because of the presence of black pupils), then we should find evidence of one or both of the following: (1) enhanced Anglo enrollment in private or parochial schools; (2) lower percentage of the Anglo population of elementary school age. These are the direct indicia of white avoidance that are employed

Table 1

Characteristics of Elementary School Population
for Selected School Districts: 1970

School Districts	Elementary School[1] Population		
	Total	Percent Black	Delta Index of School Segregation
SOUTH			
Birmingham, Ala.	42940	55.7	80*
Huntsville, Ala.	20841	14.4	55
#Mobile, Ala.	33934	40.6	72*
#Montgomery, Ala.	22682	48.7	66
Washington, D. C.	89450	94.8	81
#Hollywood, Fla.	55542	26.3	81*
#Jacksonville, Fla.	65943	30.8	79
#Pensacola, Fla.	22628	29.7	67*
#Orlando, Fla.	44640	19.7	84*
#West Palm Beach, Fla.	35010	31.5	75
#St. Petersburg, Fla.	43496	17.8	71*
#Macon, Ga.	20443	46.0	72*
#Savannah, Ga.	21709	46.3	74
Atlanta, Ga.	68753	68.8	84*
#Lexington, Ky.	19837	17.8	77*
Louisville, Ky.	29723	49.4	86
#Shreveport, La.[2]	39830	44.5	73*
#Baton Rouge, La.	37320	38.6	77*
New Orleans, La.	64644	72.1	83*
Baltimore, Md.	103174	67.2	88
Jackson, Miss.	16715	63.1	70*
#Winston-Salem, N.C.	25844	28.9	66
#Charlotte, N.C.	43283	32.2	18*
Oklahoma City, Okla.	39158	23.8	89*
#Charleston, S.C.	33609	49.3	72*

Table 1--Continued.

School Districts	Elementary School[1] Population		
	Total	Percent Black	Delta Index of School Segregation
#Greenville, S.C.	31034	22.9	16*
#Columbia, S.C.	19443	51.8	70*
#Nashville, Tenn.	52268	26.4	83*
Chattanooga, Tenn.	15050	56.1	86
Memphis, Tenn.	84473	51.8	90
Dallas, Tex.	95246	35.7	96*
Houston, Tex.	142556	37.2	89*
#Norfolk, Va.	29732	46.0	72*
Richmond, Va.	25670	64.1	70*
#Virginia Beach, Va.	26042	11.2	39*
NORTH			
Chicago, Ill.	407880	55.0	94*
Peoria, Ill.	17275	19.3	57*
Fort Wayne, Ind.	24810	16.1	77
Indianapolis, Ind.	76067	36.0	84*
South Bend, Ind.	23828	18.6	72
Flint, Mich.	26558	40.2	77
Grand Rapids, Mich.	19904	22.7	80*
Ann Arbor, Mich.	11427	10.1	45*
Detroit, Mich.	169804	63.4	80*
Cleveland, Oh.	83716	56.7	91
Columbus, Oh.	64619	26.0	80
Cincinnati, Oh.	49300	45.0	74
Toledo, Oh.	39620	29.0	77*
Dayton, Oh.	39247	40.1	86*
Akron, Oh.	31598	27.3	71
Milwaukee, Wis.	75720	28.1	88

Table 1--Continued.

School Districts	Elementary School[1] Population		
	Total	Percent Black	Delta Index of School Segregation
EAST			
Boston, Mass.	59249	32.4	81
Newark, N.J.	54940	71.5	83
Buffalo, N.Y.	44108	38.6	77
Syracuse, N.Y.	17793	25.9	49*
Pittsburgh, Pa.	44769	42.2	75*
Philadelphia, Pa.	161010	60.0	82
Providence, R.I.	11584	19.6	23*
WEST			
Wichita, Kan.	34526	16.1	68
Kansas City, Kan.	19146	32.3	79
Kansas City, Mo.	43423	51.5	85*
#Las Vegas, Nev.	42879	13.7	67
Tacoma, Wash.	20512	10.8	43*

#Indicates County School District.

*Indicates that the school district has implemented some form of desegregation program on or before 1970.

[1]An Elementary School is defined as (1) a school with grade range of less than 7, and at least one grade within the 1-6 range, or (2) a school with at least three or more grades in the 1-6 range.

[2]All information for Shreveport refers to population living in both Bossier and Caddo parishes.

Source: HEW Office of Civil Rights 1970 Survey of School Enrollment.

as dependent variables, hypothesized as being affected by the racial, socioeconomic, and housing characteristics of populations living within census tracts.

The percentage of the Anglo population age 5-13 years is used as a proxy for net out-migration. It can be suggested that if whites with school-age children respond to the presence of blacks in their neighborhood by migrating, the net effect, ceteris paribus, would be to lower their representation in the population remaining. Unfortunately, residential areas with fewer whites of school age are also more likely to attract black families because of the availability of low-cost housing, or because they live in the path of expanding black residential areas (Aldrich, 1975). The housing variables are included to take account of the first source of bias, and the percentage of the black population living in the same house in 1965 and 1970 is included in each equation to identify areas of rapid black influx.

In the Los Angeles study, private and parochial schooling were combined into a single category. They are analyzed separately here to determine whether they are used differentially by whites in responding to the presence of blacks of school age (see Table 2). Private schooling is primarily a southern phenomenon, whereas parochial schooling, although national in scope, tends to predominate in the nonsouth regions. Another reason for performing separate analyses for each type of schooling relates to their differential utilization by blacks as alternatives to public schools. An average of 98% of all children in private elementary schools are white for the sample of cities as a whole. In the case of parochial elementary schools, the proportion black varies substantially by school districts.

Table 2

Characteristics of Nonpublic Elementary School Populations for Selected School Districts: 1970

School Districts	Percent Anglo Elementary Pupils in Nonpublic Schools		Parochial Elementary School Population	
	Private	Parochial	Proportion Black	Exposure Index[1]
SOUTH				
Birmingham, Ala.	2.4	5.2	.202	.038
Huntsville, Ala.	4.4	3.4	.052	.014
#Mobile, Ala.	9.5	11.5	.181	.034
#Montgomery, Ala.	5.4	2.0	.525	.029
Washington, D.C.	25.7	20.1	.715	.230
#Hollywood, Fla.	3.6	9.3	.023	.002
#Jacksonville, Fla.	3.0	5.0	.111	.017
#Pensacola, Fla.	8.9	8.2	.124	.042
#Orlando, Fla.	1.5	6.1	.021	.005
#West Palm Beach, Fla.	4.7	9.9	.054	.009
#St. Petersburg, Fla.	1.8	8.5	.078	.000
#Macon, Ga.	6.8	2.3	.243	.012
#Savannah, Ga.	5.2	7.1	.166	.026
Atlanta, Ga.	8.1	2.9	.454	.051
#Lexington, Ky.	1.2	3.6	.030	.000
Louisville, Ky.	1.8	21.8	.103	.031
#Shreveport, La.[2]	5.0	5.5	.045	.002
#Baton Rouge, La.	2.4	11.3	.085	.025
New Orleans, La.	11.0	33.0	.313	.088
Baltimore, Md.	3.3	27.5	.127	.024
Jackson, Miss.	14.1	5.2	.121	.010
#Winston-Salem, N.C.	3.2	2.5	.223	.027
#Charlotte, N.C.	2.0	3.1	.149	.004
Oklahoma City, Okla.	2.4	3.8	.160	.020
#Charleston, S.C.	7.7	7.8	.114	.037

Table 2--Continued.

School Districts	Percent Anglo Elementary Pupils in Nonpublic Schools		Parochial Elementary School Population	
	Private	Parochial	Proportion Black	Exposure Index[1]
#Greenville, S.C.	4.4	1.6	.054	.034
#Columbia, S.C.	4.0	2.2	.160	.000
#Nashville, Tenn.	3.9	5.3	.134	.032
Chattanooga, Tenn.	5.4	1.9	.332	.061
Memphis, Tenn.	4.1	7.8	.083	.017
Dallas, Tex.	3.3	6.7	.089	.004
Houston, Tex.	2.4	7.7	.091	.021
#Norfolk, Va.	6.9	8.5	.089	.007
Richmond, Va.	6.3	5.7	.102	.025
#Virginia Beach, Va.	3.8	3.0	.016	.009
NORTH				
Chicago, Ill.	2.2	41.9	.126	.016
Peoria, Ill.	1.2	22.2	.018	.009
Fort Wayne, Ind.	.016	25.6	.043	.022
Indianapolis, Ind.	0.9	14.4	.100	.020
South Bend, Ind.	1.0	21.3	.029	.014
Flint, Mich.	1.3	15.7	.044	.017
Grand Rapids, Mich.	4.6	31.3	.041	.018
Ann Arbor, Mich.	1.2	7.6	.019	.016
Detroit, Mich.	0.9	36.8	.119	.034
Cleveland, Oh.	0.6	32.6	.077	.015
Columbus, Oh.	0.9	13.1	.092	.028
Cincinnati, Oh.	2.3	3.15	.068	.019
Toledo, Oh.	0.8	29.6	.048	.023
Dayton, Oh.	0.9	17.1	.078	.020
Akron, Oh.	1.3	16.5	.058	.022
Milwaukee, Wis.	0.5	32.0	.044	.016

Table 2--Continued.

School Districts	Percent Anglo Elementary Pupils in Nonpublic Schools		Parochial Elementary School Population	
	Private	Parochial	Proportion Black	Exposure Index
EAST				
Boston, Mass.	1.5	34.5	.048	.012
Newark, N.J.	1.8	34.7	.235	.054
Buffalo, N.Y.	1.9	39.5	.065	.026
Syracuse, N.Y.	1.3	29.2	.025	.017
Pittsburgh, Pa.	2.7	45.9	.032	.012
Philadelphia, Pa.	3.3	54.7	.101	.034
Providence, R.I.	4.8	30.0	.042	.032
WEST				
Wichita, Kan.	1.1	9.6	.021	.006
Kansas City, Kan.	0.9	17.7	.090	.036
Kansas City, Mo.	2.0	17.3	.154	.038
#Las Vegas, Nev.	0.8	3.0	.015	.000
Tacoma, Wash.	0.8	10.0	.044	.016

Indicate County School District

[1]The exposure index is computed as follows: Let W_i represent the number of white parochial elementary school pupils living in census tract (i), and P_i represent the proportion of parochial elementary school pupils living in census tract (i) who are black. The $S_{wb} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{k} W_i (P_i)}{\sum_{i=1}^{k} W_i}$.

The summation is over all census tracts.

[2]All information for Shreveport refers to populations living in both Bossier and Caddo parishes.

Source: 1970 Census of Population and Housing: Fourth Count Census Tracts, File A.

Finally, parochial elementary schools, like their counterparts in the public sector, tend to draw their pupils from particular residential areas. The attendance boundaries of most parochial elementary schools correspond to those of the church parishes. If black and white pupils attending parochial schools are segregated residentially, the potential for interracial contact is no greater than is the case in public schools. The exposure index values reported in Table 2 indicate that the potential for an average white child in parochial schools having contact with a black child is substantially less than one would expect, given the overall proportion black in parochial schools in each school district. This has caused great concern among some church officials, because the tuition cost of parochial schools may encourage whites to use them as "safe havens," particularly when the public schools are threatened with desegregation (Sarahan, 1977).

A multiple regression equation was estimated for each of the three dependent variables. Each equation included selected characteristics of residential populations living within census tracts believed to be associated with each dependent variable.[2] The discussion of results focuses only on the net effects of the percentage of the population age 5-13 years in census tracts who are black (hereafter referred to as percent black), private and parochial school utilization, and out-migration.

4. RESULTS

Table 3 presents standardized regression coefficients indicating the effect of percent black on out-migration and nonpublic school utilization

Table 3

Effect of Percent Black on Anglo Migration and Percent Anglo Enrolled in Nonpublic Schools by Type: 1970

School Districts	Effect of Percent Black: Standardized Regression Coefficients[1]			Number of Census Tracts[2]
	Migrate	Private	Parochial	
SOUTH				
Birmingham, Ala.	.202**	-.029	-.063	52
Huntsville, Ala.	.112	-.187	.007	37
#Mobile, Ala.	-.297*	.534*	-.289*	81
#Montgomery, Ala.	-.117	.001	.249	38
Washington, D.C.	-.280*	-.177	.317*	67
#Hollywood, Fla.	.140**	-.006	-.093	116
#Jacksonville, Fla.	-.190*	-.098	-.026	90
#Pensacola, Fla.	-.295*	.194	.026	36
#Orlando, Fla.	-.143	.274	.357*	76
#West Palm Beach, Fla.	-.003	.346*	.388*	77
#St. Petersburg, Fla.	.354*	-.057	.192**	108
#Macon, Ga.	.198	.166	NA	31
#Savannah, Ga.	.143	.571*	-.221	40
Atlanta, Ga.	.110	-.035	-.068	73
#Lexington, Ky.	.023	NA	-.120	41
Louisville, Ky.	.131	NA	.070	80
#Shreveport, La.	-.131	.315*	.178	52
#Baton Rouge, La.	-.088	-.058	.117	59
New Orleans, La.	-.177*	.300*	-.074	136
Baltimore, Md.	-.202*	.112**	.274*	143
Jackson, Miss.	.157	.454*	.228	31
Winston-Salem, N.C.	.135	.387**	-.306	50
#Charlotte, N.C.	-.006	.276**	-.554*	62
Oklahoma City, Okla.	-.170*	.043	.232*	105

Table 3--Continued.

School Districts	Effect of Percent Black: Standardized Regression Coefficients[1]			Number of Census Tracts
	Migrate	Private	Parochial	
#Charleston, S.C.	-.337*	.438*	-.252**	105
#Greenville, S.C.	.058	.165	NA	44
#Columbia, S.C.	-.166	.301**	NA	47
#Nashville, Tenn.	-.121	.095	.153	79
Chattanooga, Tenn.	.231**	-.186	NA	33
Memphis, Tenn.	-.004	.283*	-.107	77
Dallas, Tex.	-.189*	.338*	.031	171
Houston, Tex.	.078	.292*	-.148**	137
#Norfolk, Va.	-.006	.105	-.034	69
Richmond, Va.	.024	.192**	.004	49
Virginia Beach, Va.	-.151	.437*	.273	33
NORTH				
Chicago, Ill.	.083*	.001	.041	648
Peoria, Ill.	-.387*	NA	.337**	41
Fort Wayne, Ind.	-.341*	NA	.197	47
Indianapolis, Ind.	-.281*	.288*	.034	123
South Bend, Ind.	-.169	NA	-.084	47
Flint, Mich.	-.416*	NA	-.088	42
Grand Rapids, Mich.	-.196**	.692*	-.249	47
Ann Arbor, Mich.	-.165*	NA	.275**	34
Detroit, Mich.	-.143*	.143*	-.105**	310
Cleveland, Oh.	-.342*	NA	-.133**	161
Columbus, Oh.	-.002	NA	-.083	131
Cincinnati, Oh.	-.198*	.432*	-.228*	115
Toledo, Oh.	-.220*	NA	-.156	82
Dayton, Oh.	-.169**	NA	-.198**	67
Akron, Oh.	-.329*	NA	.119	58
Milwaukee, Wis.	-.176*	NA	.050	201

Table 3--Continued.

School Districts	Effect of Percent Black: Standardized Regression Coefficients[1]			Number of Census Tracts
	Migrate	Private	Parochial	
EAST				
Boston, Mass.	-.246*	.137**	-.123	138
Newark, N.J.	.130	NA	-.387*	70
Buffalo, N.Y.	-.046	-.030	.227*	78
Syracuse, N.Y.	-.192*	NA	.424*	62
Pittsburgh, Pa.	-.155*	.190*	.139**	171
Philadelphia, Pa.	-.126*	.102*	.039	308
Providence, R.I.	-.042	.221*	-.207	37
WEST				
Wichita, Kan.	-.035	NA	-.043	81
Kansas City, Kan.	-.121	NA	-.011	56
Kansas City, Mo.	-.128*	.388*	.053	97
#Las Vegas, Nev.	.167*	NA	.017	65
Tacoma, Wash.	-.384*	NA	-.117	42

# Indicates County School District.

* Indicates that the regression coefficient is statistically significant at the .05 level and at least twice the size of its standard error.

** Indicates that the regression coefficient is statistically significant at the .05 level and less than twice the size of its standard error.

NA Indicates that there were fewer than 500 children enrolled in private elementary schools in the district as a whole.

[1]Percentage of census tract population age 5-13 years that is black.

[2]Includes census tracts in which black population age 5-13 years represents less than 95% of total population age 5-13 years.

[3]All information for Shreveport refers to populations living in both Bossier and Caddo parishes.

Source: 1970 Census of Population and Housing: Fourth Count Census Tracts: File A.

for each central city school district: It can be noted that the effect of percent black varies enormously between districts. Baltimore and Pittsburgh are the only districts in which the effect of percent black is statistically significant and in the predicted direction for each of the indicia of White avoidance.

The substantial variation observed in the effect of percent black merely confirms what some researchers have suspected; namely that simplistic interpretations of the residence/school linkage as constant across places conceal a great deal of complexity resulting from historical circumstances as well as systematic differences between school districts that arise from the effects of racial, socioeconomic, political, and demographic forces. In Table 4, an attempt is made to determine whether interdistrict variations in the effects of percent black on the indicia of white avoidance are associated with several variables believed to affect the linkage between the racial composition of schools and residential areas. The limited number of school districts affects the type of groupings and cross-classifications that can be performed, and limits the generalizability of the results.

Table 4 presents the percentage of school districts with statistically significant coefficients for the effects of percent black. School districts are divided along a south-nonsouth axis, with respect to all the classification variables. Attention is focused on variation in the effect of percent black on migration and private school utilization, since few of the districts achieved significant coefficients for parochial school utilization.

Table 4

Percentage of School Districts with Statistically Significant Coefficients for the Effects of Percent Black

CONTROL VARIABLES	MIGRATE		PRIVATE		PAROCHIAL	
	South	Nonsouth	South	Nonsouth	South	Nonsouth
Total	25 (35)	68 (28)	46 (35)	82 (11)	17 (35)	22 (28)
Type of District						
County District	21 (19)	NA	37 (19)	NA	15 (19)	NA
Central City District	31 (16)	NA	56 (16)	NA	19 (16)	NA
Percent Black						
24% or less	14 (7)	67 (9)	17 (6)	100 (2)	33 (6)	22 (9)
25% - 49%	26 (19)	77 (13)	39 (18)	80 (5)	12 (17)	23 (13)
50% or more	33 (9)	67 (6)	67 (9)	50 (4)	25 (8)	0 (6)
Desegregation Program						
Desegregated	25 (24)	85 (13)	48 (23)	85 (7)	19 (21)	31 (13)
No Desegregation	27 (11)	60 (15)	40 (10)	60 (5)	30 (10)	7 (15)

NOTE: Values in parentheses are total observations.

The county-central city district dichotomy is only relevant for the southern region of the country, as there are few districts outside the south that serve both county populations and black pupils in significant numbers. A slightly higher percentage of central city districts shows indications of their white school age populations being reduced as a result of the increased concentration of blacks in residential areas. This is to be expected given that the availability of predominantly white suburban areas provides a variable long-term alternative to continued residence in central cities. County school districts, on the other hand, effectively reduce the likelihood of whites using migration as a means of avoiding interracial contact in public schools, since cities and suburbs are likely to be served by the same district.

The fact that percent black has significant effects on private school utilization in a greater percentage of central city districts is contrary to conventional wisdom. It is often assumed that private schooling provides the only viable alternative in a county district, since residential relocation would require in some instances a move to another labor and housing market area (Armor, 1977). The districts included in these tabulations are simply too few to allow further partitioning in order to determine whether this association is spurious or reflects a genuine differential in pattern of response with respect to type of district.

It can be hypothesized that school districts with higher percentage black are more likely to exhibit patterns of white avoidance, since the opportunity for interracial contact increases with percent black enrolled in public schools (Giles, 1977). This pattern can be observed among the

southern districts both with respect to the out-migration and private school utilization. In the case of nonsouth districts, the pattern is slightly curvilinear with respect to migration, and private school utilization is inversely related to percent black. Again a word of caution should be interjected, as the number of cases involved is simply too small to warrant anything other than a cautionary observation.

A final classification of these districts (based on information in Rossell, 1973, and U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1977) is presented according to whether they had implemented any form of desegregation program prior to the 1971 school year. Sixty-nine percent of the south and 46% of the nonsouth districts had implemented some form of desegregation program. Although the school segregation scores are moderately high for practically all of the districts, the desegregated district average score is ten points lower than the nondesegregated districts (e.g., 70 versus 80).

The most interesting aspect of the pattern exhibited in Table 4 is the fact that a higher percentage of the nonsouth desegregated districts had significant coefficients for the effects of percent black on both migration and private school utilization than is true of the southern districts. In fact, the percentage differences between the south districts is small. It would be remiss not to point out, however, that a higher percentage of the nonsouth districts showed significant effects of percent black on both private and migration even in the absence of controls. This is somewhat surprising, considering that efforts to desegregate southern districts have a longer history than is true of nonsouthern districts.

5. DISCUSSION

I began this paper by posing the question of whether whites' utilization of alternate forms of schooling was racially motivated. Efforts directed toward providing answers to this question to date have focused mainly on assessing the impact of school desegregation policies on the demographic structure of public school systems. The analysis presented in this paper may be viewed as an attempt to broaden the scope of inquiry to include the general area of residential selection and differentiation. In this regard, attention is focused on whether neighborhoods of varying racial composition within selected central cities influence whites to seek alternate forms of schooling, either by migrating or through increased utilization of nonpublic schools.

The results obtained from analyzing the effects of percent black on several indicia of white avoidance are varied and complex, and thus are not amenable to unequivocal interpretation. In the nonsouth region of the country, a strong case can be made for racial selectivity, both with respect to residential relocation and private school utilization. These regional differences persisted even after controlling for the percentage of public school pupils that are black and the implementation of desegregation programs.

The racial selectivity in residential relocation as evidenced by the effect of percent black on the percentage of the white school age population living within census tracts in nonsouthern districts is probably the result of the general process of ghetto formation and expansion (Orfield, 1975, pp. 48-49). No cross-sectional analysis of the kind presented here

can adequately take account of the forces that shape the dynamics of racially changing neighborhoods. The expansion of black residential areas at their periphery can influence whites to relocate, or to place their children in private schools until they can afford to do so. Southern cities have only recently begun to experience the growth of black residential areas as a result of their expansion into previously all white residential areas (Taeuber and Taeuber, 1965; Schnore and Evenson, 1966). This may partially explain why only the largest and oldest of the southern districts also show substantial effects of percent black on out-migration.

The utilization of private schooling as a means of minimizing interracial contact is apparently not limited to the implementation of extensive district-wide desegregation programs. This is clearly indicated by the fact that in a significant number of school districts, the increased potential for interracial contact in residential neighborhoods with increased percent black tends to invoke avoidance responses in whites similar to those believed to be associated with school desegregation.

One important question that remains to be answered in regard to the effect of percent black on private schooling is why whites in non-southern districts use this form of avoidance at the neighborhood level more frequently than whites in southern districts. As in the case of out-migration, one could speculate that historical differences in the spatial dynamics of the expansion of black residential areas may be the major factor operating. For some whites, the avoidance response may be temporary in nature until a more permanent solution is obtainable; for others, this may be the only alternative available because of employment

immobility. For example, public service employment is a large component of the local economy in central cities. In many of these cities, private schooling may be the only alternative available because of employment-related residency requirements.

The utilization of parochial schooling in the majority of districts analyzed does not appear to be racially motivated, at least at the neighborhood level. Several factors can be suggested as contributing to the outcome of the analysis performed. First, attendance at parochial schools, even with respect to non-Catholics, may be influenced more by such factors as size of classes, discipline, religious instruction, and academic standards than by racial background of peers. Indeed, many parents with children in parochial schools argue that these are their strongest attractions as an alternative to public schools (Greeley, McCready, and McCourt, 1976, pp. 3-27, 222-243). Second, open attendance policies and tuition costs may jointly discourage whites from using parochial schools in order to avoid interracial contact. This applies particularly to local areas in which parish boundaries are likely to cut across residential areas of varying racial composition.

This writer is amazed that current discussion of the efficacy of desegregation programs (Williams, 1976) has been uninformed as to the impact that community context can have on the relative success or failure of such programs. The effort to explain interdistrict variations in the indicia of white avoidance needs to be expanded to include a larger array of school districts and the addition of other relevant variables, such as the rate of city to suburban migration, the rate of growth of the black population, and whether the communities served by these school

districts experienced racial disturbances during the 1960s decade. The results of such an analysis could provide an early warning as to what types of desegregation programs will or will not work within particular types of communities.

The implications of the results of this analysis for school desegregation policy are direct. One of the main reasons given for reassigning pupils to schools on the basis of racial backgrounds under a desegregation program is that school racial isolation is in part a consequence of residential location. The results reported here clearly indicate that the process of racial selection is an important component of residential location and differentiation in some urban areas. Thus the possibility of achieving stable racially mixed school environments independent of the residential patterns of blacks and whites appears less likely in cities in which residential structures already bear the imprint of racial selection.

NOTES

[1]The determination of the school district boundaries was made possible by the use of a special census tape, which contains geographic identification codes for census tracts, block groups, and enumeration districts associated with individual school districts. The census tract codes were matched with those on the fourth count population and housing files.

[2]The full multiple regression equations included the following variables: Gini index of similarity of the income distribution of black and Anglo families; median years of schooling completed for the Anglo population; median occupational status score of the employed Anglo population; median family income of the Anglo population; percentage of the black population living in the same house in 1965; percentage of the population age 5-13 years who are black; percentage of housing units that are owner-occupied; median age of occupied dwelling units; median value of occupied dwelling units. The equations for private and parochial school utilization included the percentage of the Anglo population age 5-13 years, and the equation for parochial school utilization also included an estimate of the percentage of the Anglo population that is Catholic.

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